

Ford Mansion
Washington's Headquarters as restored
Morristown
Morris County
New Jersey

HABS No. NJ-6-32

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
New Jersey District

Historic American Buildings Survey

Prepared at Washington Office

ADDENDUM
FOLLOWS...

Washington's Headquarters
The Ford Mansion
Morristown, Morris County, New Jersey

Owner: National Park Service

Date of Erection: 1772

Architect:

Builder: Colonel Jacob Ford, Junior

Present Condition: Excellent

Number of Stories: Two

Materials of Construction: Foundation - stone

Exterior walls - frame
construction, brick filled
between studs; front eleva-
tion flush oak planks, other
elevations regular weather
boards

Interior walls - plaster

Inside brick chimneys

Roof - hip with dormers on
main portion, pitch on wing

Historical Data:

The Ford Mansion was built on a tract of land
which had been given by Colonel Jacob Ford to his son
in 1762. The foundations of the mansion were laid in

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1772; however, it was not occupied by the Ford family until 1774. The timber framing was filled in with brick, and it was clapboarded on three sides. The front, however, was made of oaken planks shiplapped and caulked. It is generally accepted that the builder was Jacob Ford, Junior, although it is probable that the home expresses the maturity of Jacob Ford's father. It is in the English Renaissance style as developed in the seventeenth century by Inigo Jones, and is a type commonly found in eighteenth century American houses.

Colonel Jacob Ford, Junior, did not live to enjoy the house that he had built. At the beginning of 1776 Ford made a contract with the Provincial Congress of New Jersey to erect a powder mill. Congress agreed to lend him two thousand pounds of public money for one year without interest which was to be repaid in good merchantable powder. The gun powder mill did good service throughout the war, although its owner died in January, 1777. Ford served in the Continental army from the beginning of the hostilities and was in command of the battalion of Morris County militia at the Battle of Springfield which took place in December, 1776. Due to exposures and rigors of service while on parade with his troops at Morristown, Colonel Ford was seized "with a delirium in his head and was borne off by a couple of soldiers, after which he never rose from his bed". He died of pneumonia early in January, 1777 and was buried with honors of war by the orders of General Washington.

Washington was offered the use of the Ford Mansion as his headquarters in 1779-'80 by Mrs. Theodosia Ford, the widow of Colonel Jacob Ford, Junior, and the daughter of Reverend Timothy Johnes famous Morristown pastor during the Revolution. Besides

Washington and his military family Mrs. Washington also stayed there most of the time. He occupied the rooms on the west side of the main hall and Mrs. Ford those on the east.

Washington brought eighteen servants with him. These plus the servants of Mrs. Ford were crowded together into the kitchen and the buildings about it, so that it was necessary to erect a log kitchen at the east end of the house. Another log cabin was also built for general office use.

Under the roof of this house were gathered together many of the illustrious characters of the Revolution. Alexander Hamilton, who was Washington's aid, lived at the mansion during 1779-1780. Lafayette, Livingston, Lord Stirling, Koschiusko, Schuyler, Light Horse Harry Lee, Putnam, Wayne, Stark, Knox, Maxwell, and Benedict Arnold were visitors at the headquarters. Washington also entertained at this mansion the new minister from France, Chevalier de la Luzerne, Baron Steuben, and Don Juan de Mirailles, who officially represented Spain. De Mirailles died while visiting there and was buried from the mansion with military honors.

The first official celebration of Washington's birthday took place at this house in 1780.

In 1874 a group of citizens in Morristown formed the Washington Association in New Jersey and purchased the Ford Mansion. It was used by them as a museum until March 2, 1933, when it was made a part of the Morristown Historic Park.

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Pamphlet of the Department of the Interior regarding Morristown National Historic Park

Field Book and Drawings of Survey

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Reviewed Aug. 20, 1936 T.W.

Colonel Jacob Ford Jr. House (Washington's Headquarters)
230 Morris Street (Current Information)
Morristown
Morris County
New Jersey

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Addendum to
Ford Mansion (Washington Headquarter's restored) (As originally recorded)
Morristown
Morris County
New Jersey

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

ADDENDUM
FOLLOWS...

ADDENDUM TO
COLONEL JACOB FORD JR. HOUSE
(WASHINGTON'S HEADQUARTERS)
230 Morris Street
Morristown
Morris County
New Jersey

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